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ABSTRACT

Intended for use as a training model for writing teacher inservice efforts, this report surveys the Portland (Oregon) Writing Project which was designed specifically to improve the quality of writing instruction and the quality of student writing in Portland schools. Following an introduction that outlines the goals of the project, the report describes the project and documents its contributions to the Portland School District through teacher reports of effectiveness of the staff development/renewal efforts, through descriptions of changes made in classroom writing instruction, and through a record of participants' nonclassroom activities that serve to promote quality writing throughout the school system. The report concludes with four appendixes: (1) a description of the Oregon Writing Project at Lewis and Clark University, of which the Portland Writing Project is a satellite; (2) a list of the 1985 Portland Project fellows and advisory committee members; (3) a sample teacher survey questionnaire on the project; and (4) a summary of teacher responses to the questionnaire. (NKA)

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# 1986-87 Evaluation Report

# THE PORTLAND WRITING PROJECT

# IN THE PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

by Carolyn Moilanen

Research and Evaluation Dept.
Portland Public Schools
Portland, Oregon
Walter E. Hathaway, Director

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# PORTLAND WRITING PROJECT

1986-87

by

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with the assistance of
Gerry MacKinnon

Department of Research and Evaluation
Portland Public Schools

March 1987

Table of Contents


| | Page |
|---|---|
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| DESCRIPTION OF THE PORTLAND WRITING PROJECT | 1 |
| THE 1986-87 PORTLAND WRITING PROJECT | 3 |
| EVALUATION | 4 |
| Classroom Practices | 6 |
| Personal Renewal | 8 |
| Professional Renewal | 10 |
| FINDINGS | 14 |
| CONCLUSIONS | 15 |
| RECOMMENDATIONS | 16 |
| APPENDIX | |
| Oregon Writing Project at Lewis & Clark; Course Expectations for 1986 Summer Institute | 18 |
| 1985-86 Portland Writing Project Fellows and Portland Writing Project Advisory Committee | 20 |
| Portland Writing Project Teacher Survey Questionnaire | 22 |
| Summary of Teacher Responses to Survey Questionnaire | 24 |

## INTRODUCTION

The Oregon Writing Project is a program designed to improve the quality of writing instruction and the quality of student writing in Oregon schools. Patterned after the National Writing Project which began in Berkeley, California, in 1973, the Oregon Writing Project was first established at the University of Oregon in 1975. The Oregon Writing Project at Lewis & Clark College and a satellite Portland Public Schools' Writing Project were established in 1984.

The Portland Writing Project is both a staff development and a staff renewal program for experienced classroom teachers at all grade levels and across all curriculum areas. The Project goals are three-fold:

- To increase teachers' knowledge of theories and strategies for teaching writing,
- To improve teachers' own writing,
- To develop teachers' leadership skills in support of continuing writing inservice activities.

This report describes the Portland Writing Project and documents its contributions to the District through teacher reports of effects of the staff development/renewal efforts, through descriptions of changes made in classroom writing instruction and through a record of participants' nonclassroom activities which serve to promote quality writing throughout the school system.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Portland Writing Project is a teacher training project which emphasizes improvement in the quality of writing instruction at all levels.

The staff development model for Project training is based on the following assumptions:

1. Many teachers from all grade levels and across all content areas have developed their own effective instructional methods, and their expertise and experience are a valuable resource for training other teachers.

2. The best teacher of teachers is another teacher.

3. Teachers of writing must themselves write.

4. Effective training programs must be both on-going and systematic.

The Portland Writing Project is directed by two District teachers, Linda Christensen of Jefferson High School and Michelann Ortloff of Bridlemile School, and guided by an advisory committee consisting of Portland Public School staff and representatives from the Lewis & Clark College Project. A key task of the advisory committee is the interview and selection of Project participants, or "Fellows." In the spring, announcements are sent to building principals inviting them to nominate teachers to participate in the Project. Because one program goal is to provide leadership for writing at both the building and the District level, the principal's understanding and support of a nominee's broader role and responsibilities is essential to Project participation. The advisory committee invites applications from those nominated and interviews each applicant. A list of 1985-86 Project Fellows, and members of the Portland Writing Project Advisory Committee is in the Appendix.

During the 1984-85 school year, six District teachers participated as Project Fellows. During 1985-86, an additional seven teachers were selected

to participate. During the first two years of the Project, the following accomplishments were reported:

1. All Project Fellows increased the amount of writing required in their individual classrooms.

2. Project Fellows served on building-level writing committees and were key presentors at building staff and cluster principals' meetings.

3. All Fellows taught part of a series of Teachers' Individualized Credit (TIC) workshops with the District's language arts specialist.

4. Fellows in the Lincoln cluster produced a teacher handbook, "The Writing Process -- Growing Together." Project participants were instrumental in establishing writing process programs throughout the eleven schools in the cluster.

5. A variety of publications (including both student and teacher writing) were produced.

## THE 1986-87 PORTLAND WRITING PROJECT

During 1986-87, the Portland Public Schools allocated $26,000 to support Project training for twenty-four District teachers. Ten elementary, seven middle school, and seven high school teachers were selected to participate. Each participant received ten quarter hours of graduate credit from Lewis & Clark College for participation in an intensive one-month training program which was conducted from June 23 to July 18, 1986. A description of the course and credit requirements is in the Appendix.

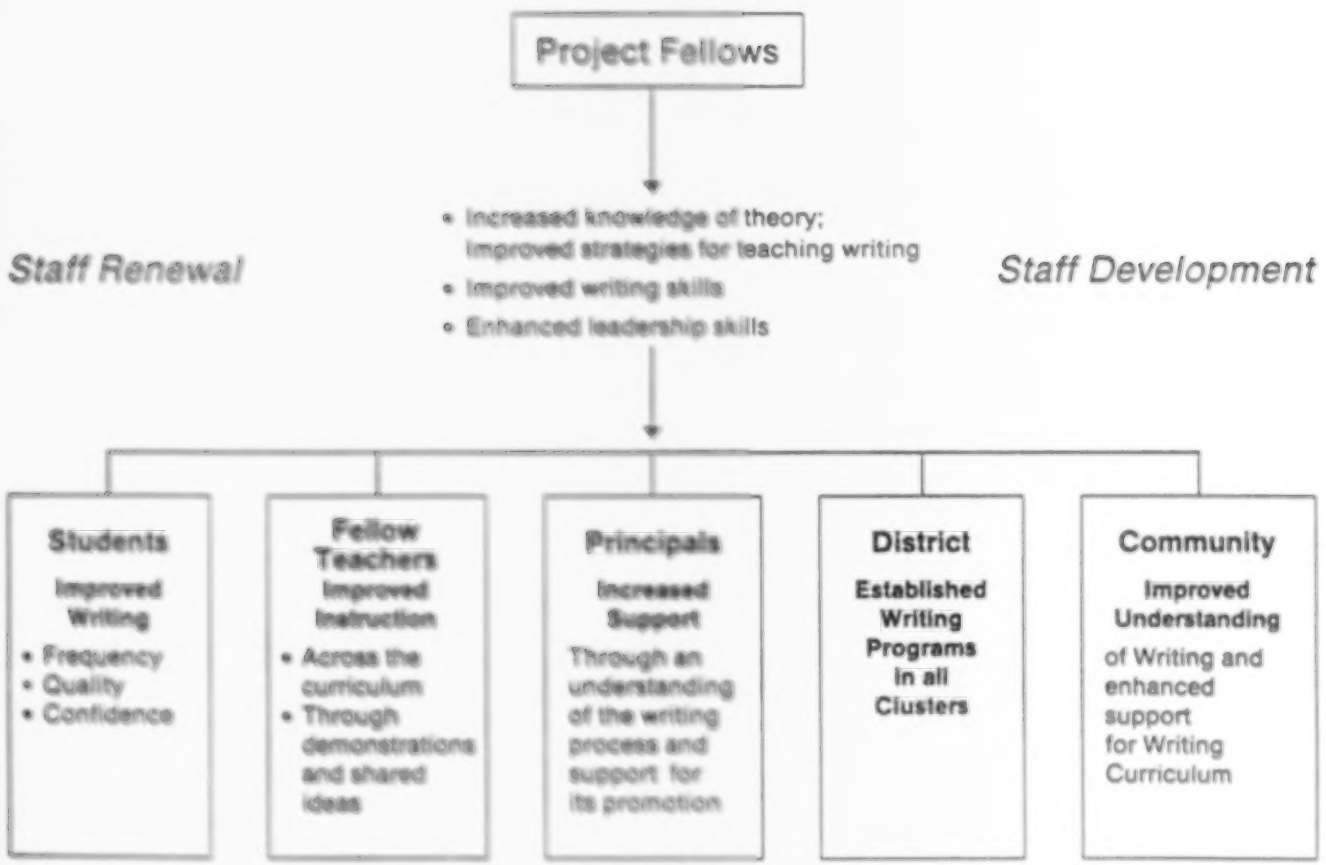
The training program included a series of formal presentations as well as individual participant presentations. Program emphasis was on the writing "process." Techniques of writing which were presented included

prewriting, linking personal and formal writing, establishing real audiences, small group sharing, and critiquing. Two or three times each week, afternoons were spent in "response groups" where each teacher's individual writing was discussed for the purpose of gaining insight for revisions and improvements. During the first three weeks of training, each teacher was required to produce one polished and revised piece of writing on a topic of his or her own choice. A position paper on the teaching of writing was required as a final product during the fourth week. A publication of class writing was produced at the conclusion of the training session. Project Fellows continued to meet once a month during the school year for two-hour after-school sessions devoted to collegial sharing, reinforcement, and writing.

## EVALUATION

The Curriculum Department requested the services of the Department of Research and Evaluation to conduct an evaluation and document the contributions of the Portland Writing Project to the Portland Public Schools. Because the Project is a staff training effort, program directors expected that the Project would directly impact participating teachers in terms of both personal and professional renewal and then have an effect on a variety of other District audiences. Figure 1 displays the expected Project outcomes for the 1986-87 Project Fellows and for other District audiences.

**Figure 1**
**Diagram of Expected Outcomes for Audiences Impacted by the Portland Writing Project**



In order to collect information on teacher perceptions of personal and professional renewal, participants were asked to select representative pieces of their own writing which reflected on the relationship between their summer training and their fall teaching experience.

The Portland Writing Project Teacher Survey Questionnaire was designed to collect information on changes in classroom writing instruction. Responses were summarized according to four topics: 1) Writing Instruction, 2) Student Participation, 3) Classroom Management, and 4) Evaluation. Teachers were also asked to record a tally of their nonclassroom Project-related activities.

Questionnaire items were developed by a co-director of the Portland Writing Project and a representative of the Department of Research and Evaluation. Questionnaires were distributed to the twenty-four Project Fellows during January 1986. Seventy-nine percent of the questionnaires (from five elementary, six middle school, and eight high school teachers; N = 19) were completed and returned for analysis.

Classroom Practices

Respondents were asked to describe their instructional practices by providing open-ended responses to the general question "How is your classroom different this year as a result of your participation in the Portland Writing Project?" Four topics were listed to guide responses: 1) Writing Instruction, 2) Student Participation, 3) Classroom Management, and 4) Evaluation. A summary of teacher responses is in the Appendix.

Each part of a teacher's response was separately tallied according to the four topic categories so that comment frequencies may exceed the total

number of respondents. The most frequent comments across all four topics referred to specific instructional changes which were a result of Project training (N=23), to an increase in student writing (N=24), and to the perception that student attitudes about writing were improved because of instructional changes (N=16).

Teachers reported that they used a variety of different techniques in their writing instruction, such as: regular meetings with student response groups, peer editing, personal journals, increased use of modeling, and use of computers for writing and revision. Teachers reported that they used the English textbook less frequently and emphasized creative writing and writing to explore concepts more frequently.

Teachers reported that students were writing more, and that students were writing for different purposes. Examples of different kinds and purposes of student writing included: composing letters, writing story problems for math, entering writing contests, writing narratives for videotape presentations, preparing written pieces for bulletin board/hallway displays and publishing class books. Teachers noted that the increased quantity of written work was accompanied by a willingness and enthusiasm for writing which helped students become more fully involved in the writing process.

Sixteen of nineteen teacher respondents indicated that there were few management problems as a result of students' positive and cooperative attitudes about writing. One middle school teacher described her writing class like this:

> These kids love the writing program. It provides enough opportunities for them to be independent and feel more "adult" because it doesn't tell every youngster what he/she will write and how.

A high school teacher wrote:

> When students write about themselves, when they can compose in groups, when they share their ideas, management becomes less of an issue -- or a nonissue.

Of three remaining respondents, one teacher reported that management was the "same as always," another responded that management is "not a problem due to small number of students I work with," and a third did not respond to the Classroom Management topic.

Teachers reported that their evaluation practices were becoming more holistic as their focus broadened from specific (e.g., punctuation and spelling) to individual growth in writing development. Evaluation practices mentioned were: direct writing assessment, analytical trait rating, on-going review of records, teacher-student conference notes, and "taking a long look into the writing folder and doing some comparisons." Four teachers described the change in evaluation methods as more time-consuming and/or more difficult than traditional grading practices. One teacher described the evaluation as a cooperative student-teacher process like this:

> Holistic evaluation, self evaluation. Participation in the writing assessments becomes the criteria or method of evaluation. Students at all academic levels learn to identify what is good about their writing. They share their writing as well as publish. It is necessary to evaluate holistically -- to "measure" their growth from the student's perspective.

Personal Renewal

Because Project fellows typically maintain personal journals which reflect on the relationship between their training and their teaching experience, self-selected samples were requested for the purpose of identifying common elements in descriptions of the training-to-teaching

transition. Two evaluation specialists read the nine sets of journal entries and independently summarized the main topics presented in each selection. In general, the nine respondent teachers reported that:

° The collegial support of the training experience was meaningful, appreciated, and empowered Project fellows to sustain their enthusiasm, to "take charge" of their writing instruction, and to share the commitment to quality writing with their students.

During the summer training session, one teacher wrote:

> "Remember me? I'm the one who came to this class feeling like a fake but keeping quiet about it and wondering if I could keep up the sham for a full four weeks -- with the Fourth of July off. Remember me? I'm the one who wanted to give her presentation right away, because I only had one idea and was afraid someone else would use it. Remember me? I'm the one who loved almost everything and every class said, "I can do it; I can write!"

By December, another teacher had written:

> "I still have to shake off instilled habits of teaching. This fall I have been grading final drafts but now see how completely this gets in the way of students stretching their own limits. This process of grading keeps me in the role of judge, of the one with the final word. Yet when the students accept ownership of their own writing, their own evaluative skills sharpen and their writing thereby improves. When the second semester starts, I'm going to restructure the grading system, letting students know I feel they're ready for more freedom and thereby more responsibility."

° Teachers were trusting students' instincts about writing more, and students were producing more writing than in the past, and were perceived as having improved attitudes toward the writing experience.

> "Inviting the student writers to completely engage themselves in their writing by drawing out their interests, their concerns in the prewriting process, actually makes <u>writers</u> rather than just simply students completing an assignment."

> "I've learned to trust the students' ability to improve their writing by learning to encourage them to work on their own ideas."
>
> "All in all I feel I teach in a much more natural environment. The writing process works for me and for the kids. I started using it in previous years, but the backup, the encouragement of the group has given me the impetus to more fully open to it. With each classroom writing experience, both I and the kids gain more confidence, experience, more success."

- Teachers' own writing was becoming easier because the training experience had encouraged them to write; teachers were keeping class journals along with their students.

> "The experience of writing has pushed me to do it. I needed that. I used to think of writing as a real chore, but it is getting easier and easier after each writing I do. There was a closeness and trust that developed in this group. I felt productive as an individual and also as a group. We all were supportive of each other and that was important."

Professional Renewal

A stated purpose of the Portland Writing Project training is for staff "renewal." This goal implies recognition of the worth of one's professional role and realization of opportunities to practice and/or extend that role beyond traditional expectations. Within the literature of human resource development, renewed career goals are often described as stages, or phases, of professional career development. Dalton, et al., (1977) suggest that there are four career stages, each defined in terms of the central professional activity, the nature of the primary professional relationship, and major psychological issues related to each career stage. See Figure 3.

Figure 3

Four Career Stages[1]

| | Stage I | Stage II | Stage III | Stage IV |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Central Activity | Helping Learning Following directions | Independent contributor | Training Interfacing | Shaping the direction of the of the organization |
| Primary relationship | Apprentice | Colleagues | Mentor | Sponsor |
| Major psychological issues | Dependence | Independence | Assuming responsibility for others | Exercising power |

Adapting this paradigm to an educational context and a traditional school setting, teacher training and early classroom practice might be described as Stage I. The central activities of teaching focus upon students within an organizational framework which operates according to departmental and/or administrative directives. If one confines his or her perspective on the teaching career to this setting, and defines primary relationships solely in terms of teachers and their students, it is likely that many classroom teachers move through phases which are similar to those described in Stages II, III, and IV during their careers.

---

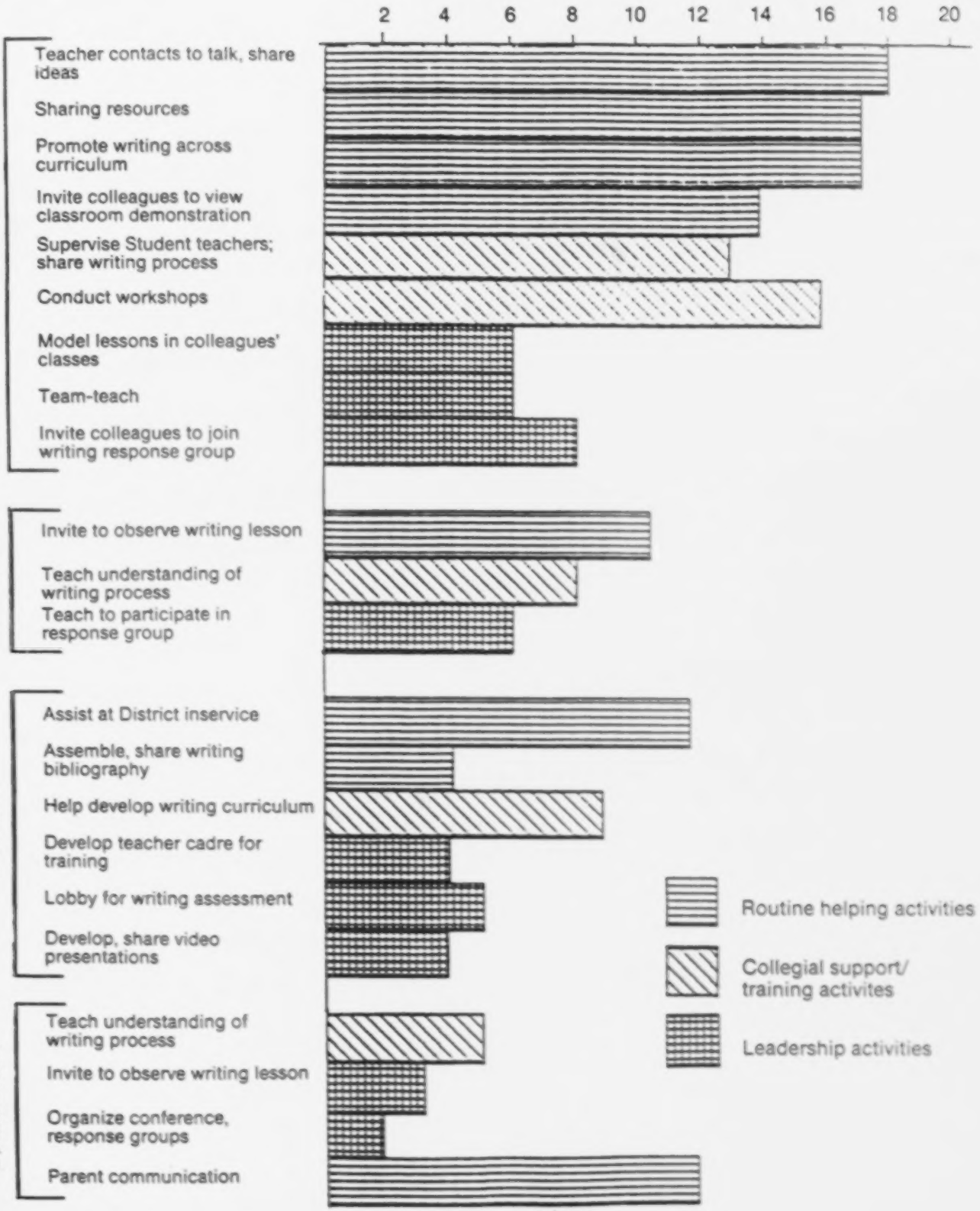
1 From Dalton, Gene W., Thompson, Paul H., and Price, Raymond L. (1977). The four stages of professional careers -- a new look at performance by professionals. Organizational Dynamics, 7, 19-41.

If one accepts the underlying premises of the Portland Writing Project (that teachers' instructional expertise is a resource for other teachers and that teachers are the best teachers of one another), perspectives on teaching careers are necessarily expanded to include a variety of potential audiences and educational settings other than students in regular classroom environments. When these assumptions are accepted, staff renewal and development efforts focus equally on students and one's teaching peers, the educational administration, and the community at large.

Figure 2 displays a summary of Fellows' Project activities targeted at audiences outside the regular classroom. This record presents activities conducted during the first six months of the 1986-87 school year. The figure includes a vertical list of 22 separate Project-related activities categorized according to four different intended audiences -- Teachers, Principals, District, and Community. The horizontal bars represent the number of Project Fellows who reported participation in each activity. Activities generally fall in one of three categories: 1) those which are easier to accomplish because they are fairly routine, 2) support and training activities for other professionals, and 3) leadership activities.

Within audience categories, activities are listed in order of increasing difficulty. For example, in the Teacher category, contacting a colleague to share ideas about writing can be accomplished more easily than involving a colleague in a writing response group. The intended audiences are similarly ordered; pursuing interactions with colleagues at the building level is usually easier than conducting workshops at the District level.

## Figure 2
## Summary of Fellows' Project-Related Activities with Teachers, Principals, District, Community
## N = 18



More Project Fellows reported participation in activities with their building teaching colleagues than with other targeted audiences. Next, in rank order, more Fellows participated with District groups, Principals, and the Community. In each of the four audience categories, the activities most widely engaged in, while requiring personal initiative, are fairly routine. Activities less uniformly engaged in (e.g., teaching the Principal to participate in a response group, or developing a District cadre for teacher training) require that Project Fellows have begun to establish a reputation for professional expertise and leadership outside the regular classroom. It is noteworthy that in a period of six months (September to February), between four and twelve of the 18 respondents conducted activities aimed at a District audience.

## FINDINGS

Teachers' responses to the Portland Writing Project Survey Questionnaire and writing samples from their personal journal entries indicate that:

1. Teachers perceived their Portland Writing Project training as a positive professional experience. Frequent references were made to personal rewards of the group participation.

2. Teachers reported that they have begun to use a writing process approach in their instruction, and that they use instructional techniques which they learned during Project training.

3. Teachers reported the following outcomes for their students:

- Students are writing more,
- Students have improved attitudes about writing, and
- The cooperative classroom atmosphere is conducive to fewer management problems.

4. Teachers have begun to use more holistic assessment of student writing. Teachers reported that this new method of evaluation is an improvement, but that it is more demanding than conventional grading procedures.

5. During the first six months of the school year, Project Fellows have participated in promoting writing among their teaching colleagues, principals, and the community.

- All 19 of the Project Fellows who responded to the questionnaire have contacted their colleagues to share ideas about the writing process approach.
- Eleven of the 19 respondents have participated in activities with one or more of the other intended audiences (Principals, District, Community), and three respondents have participated in activities with all three audiences.

## CONCLUSIONS

The Portland Writing Project has increased participants' knowledge of theories and strategies for teaching writing. The Project training experiences have influenced teachers' methods of instruction and evaluation of student writing. As a result, their students are writing more, and students' positive attitudes about writing have contributed to improved classroom management.

A record of participants' Project-related activities during the first six months of the 1986-87 school year indicates that Project Fellows, as a group, have exercised leadership in promoting writing among their teaching colleagues and with principals, at the District level, and in the community at large.

The continuing training support provided by monthly after-school meetings has served to maintain teachers' enthusiasm for the goals of the Project, and provided teachers an opportunity to share and continue their development as writers within a collegial response-group setting.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Curriculum Department continue to monitor the Project Fellows' leadership role in efforts to improve the quality of writing instruction in the Portland Public Schools.

The Departments of Curriculum and Research and Evaluation are now in the third year of a developmental project for Direct Writing Assessment. It is recommended that the Curriculum Department consider the future use of the Direct Writing Assessment to investigate the impact of the Portland Writing Project on student writing performance.

The Portland Writing Project training model may be useful to support other inservice efforts when specific curricular and/or instructional changes are a District objective. If the Curriculum Department uses this model for other teacher training efforts, it is recommended that its usefulness in other curricular areas be evaluated.

## APPENDIX

- Oregon Writing Project at Lewis & Clark
  Course Expectations for 1986 Summer Institute

- 1985-86 Portland Writing Project Fellows and
  Portland Writing Project Advisory Committee

- Portland Writing Project Teacher Survey Questionnaire

- Summary of Teacher Responses to Survey Questionnaire

Oregon Writing Project at Lewis & Clark

COURSE EXPECTATIONS FOR 1986 SUMMER INSTITUTE

1. Ed. 648 - "Workshop in Teaching Writing" -
   One Lewis & Clark credit (5 quarter hours) - Pass/No Pass

   - Give a 45-90 minute presentation to the class.
   - Do assigned readings from texts on time to be able to contribute to class discussions and activities.
   - Consult with others from your district or school and assist (on July 17) in planning inservice activities for next year.
   - Write a position paper on teaching writing (due Thursday, July 17).
   - Keep and turn in daily a learning log of comments and questions on each day's work.

2. Ed. 698 - "Writing Workshop for Teachers"
   One Lewis & Clark credit (5 quarter hours) - Pass/No Pass

   - Maintain a writing folder with all drafts of works.
   - Bring writings-in-progress each week to share with your writing group.
   - Revise your writings following group response.
   - Help the writing group work.
   - Turn in one finished piece (due Tuesday, July 15) that you are willing to have be a part of our class publication).
   - Turn in two other pieces (due Thursday, July 17).

About the writing assignments:

You will be meeting two or three times in the afternoon every week with your writing group. The group's purpose is to support your growth as a writer (and the experience will, we hope, shed light on your work as a teacher of young writers). You will need to bring pieces of writing to be discussed with the writing group every time it meets. These do not need to be highly-polished pieces; in fact, they should be pieces you are committed to improving. If a piece of writing is in its final form, there's no reason to bring it to the group. The idea is to get responses from your peers for subsequent revision on your own.

The pieces of writing you share with the group can be of any form or shape. You might bring parts of a larger work (sections of an essay, short chapters from a book) or pieces that stand on their own (short stories, poems, letters, personal narratives, etc.). You may bring pieces of writing you have started in class during one of the teacher presentations, if you wish, or bring other pieces of recent writing. You might want to bring your position paper, the only assigned topic we will make.

As long as you are contributing your own writings to the group every week, you can decide how best to use your colleagues' responses to meet your needs as a writer. You may choose to take the same work to your group over and over again

between successive revisions during the whole month of the project. (After all, how many hundreds of times did Hemingway rewrite the last paragraph to A Sun Also Rises?) Or, you may prefer to bring three different pieces to your group every week and never bring the same piece twice. Please use the group as you need to for your own learning.

For the course, however, you will need to average one polished, revised piece a week on this schedule.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Assignments: | week #1<br>week #2<br>week #3 | Writer-chosen topics |
| | week #4 | Position paper on teaching writing |

The position paper is the only assigned topic. This will be a statement on effective teaching of writing. Our main standard for assessing these position papers is this: The position paper must be useful to the writer. Your position paper might be your own personal philosophy of teaching writing. It might be the introduction to a district writing guide you're helping to put together. It might be a year's lesson plans based on some general principles you've outlined. It might be grant proposal to get funding for your program. It might be a letter to the parents of your students explaining why you're doing what you're doing in you writing curriculum. It might be a request for supplies or resources or other support from your principal, based on a brief outlining of support you believe a quality writing program deserves. It might be a statement to give students in your class in a handout at the start of the year, explaining your position on teaching writing. The form and length of the position paper (as with all the papers) will be left up to you. It should be new work and reflect what you're learning in the project. It's a way for you to integrate and summarize your understandings.

All the writings are due on THURSDAY, July 17, with one exception. We would like you to choose one of the four finished works (it can be one of the three unassigned topic writings or the position paper) to be included in our class publication. This one paper will need to be turned in on TUESDAY, July 15 so we will have time to bind it into a book by the last day of the summer institute. (We will print these papers exactly as they are turned in, so they will need to to be in as publishable a form as you can manage - typed would be nice, or written legibly in bold black ink, and proofread and neat. We want our book to look sharp!

1985 PORTLAND WRITING PROJECT FELLOWS

| | |
|---|---|
| Nancy Abbott | Sellwood |
| Francis-Joan Basick | George |
| Gail Black | Jefferson |
| Beth Ann Bull | Vernon |
| Kris Demien | Grant |
| Kathryn Ehlers | Franklin |
| Virginia Everton | Hayhurst |
| Scott Greer | Gregory Heights (on leave 86-87) |
| Sandi Hansen | Ockley Green |
| Helen Hess | Sunnyside |
| Ken Horne | Maplewood School |
| Sharon Jones | West Sylvan School |
| Margaret Marsh | Llewellyn |
| Sylvia Martin | Ainsworth |
| James McCully | Duniway |
| Brenda Nelson | Benson |
| Charlotte Pennington | Cleveland |
| Frederick Rogers | Benson |
| Ann Romish | Markham |
| Mary Ellen Showalter | Chief Joseph |
| Tom Streckert | Fernwood |
| Helen Strong | Clark |
| Carlyn Syvanen | Grant |
| Patti White | Duniway |

PORTLAND WRITING PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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PORTLAND WRITING PROJECT
TEACHER SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect teacher information on the continuing effects of the Portland Writing Project Training.

1. What grade(s) do you teach? Circle response: K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

2. What subject(s) do you teach? _____

3. Are you doing any personal writing? Yes No

4. Are you involved in an ongoing response group (other than the training group?) Yes No

5. How is your classroom different this year as a result of your participation in the Portland Writing Project?

   Writing Instruction: _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

   Student Participation: _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

   Classroom Management: _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

   Evaluation: _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. Please indicate how many times you have participated in any of the following activities:

Activities with Other Teachers

Contact other teachers; talk, share ideas ____

Share resources with colleagues ____

Promote writing in all curriculum areas ____

Supervise student teachers and share writing process approach ____

Encourage classroom visits by other teachers; demonstrate model lessons ____

Arrange/present workshops to colleagues ____

Teach in other classes; model writing lesson ____

Work with voluntary partners in team/coaching ____

Invite staff members to join writing/response groups ____

Other:

Activities with Principals

Teach an understanding of the writing process ____

Invite into classes to observe writing lessons ____

Teach to participate in a conference/response group ____

Other:

Activities at District Level

Help plan, coordinate cluster, district inservice workshops ____

Assemble bibliography of writing resources; help build library, provide research information ____

Help develop writing curriculum ____

Develop teacher cadre for teacher training ____

Lobby for writing assessment ____

Develop and share video presentations of effective writing lessons ____

Other:

Activities in the Community

Teach an understanding of the writing process ____

Invite into classes to observe writing lessons ____

Organize volunteers to participate in conference/response groups ____

Parent communication ____

PORTLAND WRITING PROJECT

TEACHER SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

SUMMARY OF TEACHER RESPONSES

1. Writing Instruction

My students receive written language instruction daily. I use my training from the Oregon Writing Project (OWP) in every aspect of teaching.

I'm not using our English text. We write and work on concepts through our writing lessons.

Minimum 1/2 time, sustained writing daily. Journal and learning log entries made daily. Use student writing for instruction. One hour per week for writing instruction.

More focused instruction occurs daily in writing; I feel more comfortable being less a "teacher" and more a "learner;" we have a comfortable writing workshop atmosphere.

Same since I was using writing process last year.

Much more on creative writing, often using structured topic or after modeling grammar rules, etc. Far less time spent in textbooks. Less emphasis on nomenclature; using modeling instead. Names and labels are included, but peripherally.

I began Donald Graves' method one year before participating in OWP. Since participating in OWP, (summer of '85), I'd say the skills I use are refined--I have more materials available and feel I have more options for students.

The writing project built my own confidence in my "own" writing. This confidence rubs off and gives the student the feeling that writing is one of the most important skills an individual can develop.

The DOI said I wrote good suspension letters! The way the writing project has influenced my life is too long to mention. I have written a plan for the Cleveland cluster, shared it with the Lincoln cluster, suggested in-service for Sellwood. It is an invaluable tool for developing thinking skills, recall, emotional release, sharing life, etc. I really think it's SUPER!

My writing program is set up according to Donald Graves' Writing: Teachers and Children at Work.

The children write more frequently and for a wider variety of reasons and in more subject areas. I've decreased my emphasis on punctuation and spelling until a piece is to be presented.

Use process approach. Teach literature, history, through writing. Write more often, take fewer pieces to final draft. Publish more often.

Students write more frequently.

Although I used the process approach before my participation, I feel even more secure with my methods and instruction. I have many more strategies--more student publications. I'm using computers to teach writing and revision.

Still using editing groups.

I'm teaching the writing process, identifying specific objectives and implementing analytical performance and objective assessment.

More process-oriented, more aware of resources.

I involve students with the writing before we begin. Also, I use writing for <u>thinking</u>.

More responsive to students' interests and suggestions/more student involvement/more feedback on effectiveness.

2. Student Participation

My students are asking to write. We enter contests, write letters, write essays, make books, do research for writing, write math story problems, etc.

My students are writing more often and with more freedom.

Weekly sharing groups, peer editing groups, compiling class books.

Students are enthusiastic, willing to write daily and in all academic areas.

Same since I was using writing process last year.

Much more emphasis on oral practice, group discussion, etc. before writing. Lots of sharing their writing with group or class. Much more "publication" of students' works through book binding, bulletin board displays, hallway displays, videotaped presentations.

Students this year are writing more across the curriculum, tying in with the history of America (social studies adoption).

I have used a number of my summer colleague's practical ideas. Student participation, discussions, peer editing and proofreading, writing regularly has been up-beat.

I meet daily with five to six students in a response group for 30 minutes. Remaining students work on their own writing or confer with peers in hall.

All of my students seem eager to share their writing, and only one child objects to writing groups. The rest seem to see "groups" as the most important part of the day.

More student direction in class. Less teacher-directed. Students participate in almost 100% of writing activity.

Students are more comfortable with oral sharing than ever before.

Students, though, do get excited about their own writing. They understand that they have power and that their writing and ideas are valid and important.

Peer editing groups invite enthusiastic participation.

More students are drafting and redrafting than ever before. Students enjoying ownership.

Students are more excited about the writing exercises due to less evaluation on my part and more various exercises.

Fuller involvement in all stages of writing practice/more responsibility for improving writing/improved skills.

3. Classroom Management

The editing groups are very helpful, student writer with writer. They manage and are such good judges.

They love to share their writing, and their listening is becoming more skilled.

Students spend more time working independently and they help each other more.

Not a problem due to small number of students I work with.

More individualized.

About the same. I've always had good management skills. However, my low scale group is behaving better and writing pages and pages!

More opportunity for written feedback on students' feelings; more writing and learning logs to track their grasp of concepts--this helps keep management positive.

Lots of papers, writing folders, days are broken down to pre-write, draft, revise, edit and share own writing. That (classroom management) can be moody at times but overall it's been great.

Two hall passes to accommodate up to four kids in hall for conferences. Writing happens daily for 30 minutes. About two or three times a week I teach a writing activity (usually to generate new topics, teach style, voice, etc.) These kids love the writing program. It provides enough opportunities for them to be independent and feel more "adult" because it doesn't tell every youngster what he/she will write and how. Most importantly, it provides each youngster a guaranteed five minutes of my individualized attention each week. That's a lot of time--all things considered.

When writing groups are scheduled at the end of the day, I notice students more quickly, work quickly and quietly to finish other work so "groups" can begin on time.

Fewer problems.

Peer editing--response groups--are effective. Prior to OWP experience, my students rarely worked in groups.

When students write about themselves, when they can compose in groups, when they share their ideas, management becomes less of an issue--or a nonissue.

Same as always.

Better organized evaluation. More confident.

Easier because students are more involved.

Greater variety in learning modes allows for more relaxed learning atmosphere/students positive/at ease.

4. Evaluation

I have not been the same since I took the Oregon Writing Class, and certainly my students have written more this year than all my years combined.

This is far more difficult since there are no "cut and dried" right answers.

Students spend longer periods of time working on a paper. My focus is on content first and grammar as it affects clarity of idea.

Anecdotal records, conference records are kept as part of writing folder, analytical evaluation occurs quarterly as part of IEP review.

Life and study skills more appropriately and realistically addressed.

After graduating from Lewis and Clark, getting an M.Ed. from the University of Portland, I honestly feel that this training is the equivalent of another degree. My teaching skills, this year, are far better than previously. I enjoy my subject more and I certainly enjoy my classes more.

Still a hard and tricky area in creative writing; no problem in specific social studies topics. I make sure class knows the criteria by which writing will be judged.

I have been using a sixth-grade watered down version of the new scoring guide. Student feedback and how the process went, plus the final result. Long-run evaluation on a student is best measured by taking a long look into the writing folder and doing some comparisons.

Final copy and two or more drafts--evaluated for: ideas, style and vocabulary, paragraphs, sentences, mechanics.

I spend less time correcting paragraphs, essays, etc., but the students are writing more. What I do correct is of better quality than in the past.

Direct writing assessment, writing folders, instead of grading individual papers. No grades on individual papers. Students evaluated on growth.

I feel more comfortable including effort--revision--into the grading process.

Holistic evaluation, self evaluation. Participation in the writing assessments becomes the criteria or method of evaluation. Students at all academic levels learn to identify what is good about their writing. They share their writing as well as publish. It is necessary to evaluate holistically--to "measure" their growth from the student's perspective.

For the first time, assessing learning on all levels of thinking--recall to evaluation.

I LOVE THE OWP as it has affected my teaching and as it continues to.

Based more on encouragement/in process of change to reflect even more encouragement.

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